

District Technician Program Re-enrollment

CSCB recognizes that the security of technician positions reflects on the ability of districts to retain better quality individuals and realize better return on their training investment. Since the government funding for this program is by annual appropriation, there cannot be an absolutely guaranteed funding source from year to year. However 2007 represents year five of full funding for the program and both the Natural Resources Conservation Service and Colorado State Conservation Board consider this a high priority program for future funding. In addition, our sister organization the Colorado Association of Conservation Districts has strongly supported securing funds for this program.

To further reassure districts with future funding security, CSCB administers the program to offer “priority funding” to renewing districts over new applicants to the program each year. However, the program needs to balance absolute need and urgency for technical assistance with ‘automatic renewal’ and so there will always be a potentially competitive element to remain in the program depending on funding availability and expressed needs. Caps on increases in funding will also still potentially apply depending on funding availability.

From 2007 CSCB will be streamlining the renewing districts application for continued funding by granting *potential automatic refunding for established positions* subject to the districts having demonstrated the following over the previous contract period in line with program expectations:

1. Significant workload of NRCS measurable planning and practices recorded on NRCS PRS database.
2. Workload duties are in line with program guidelines.
3. Quarterly reports, including PRS workload, fully completed and submitted according to deadline schedule.
4. All funds (award and match) spent within the contract period (calendar year) – unless unforeseen circumstances that the district has tried but not been able to mitigate (e.g. technician illness, sudden vacancies). See below for guidelines.
5. District accounting for funds is adequate and in line with allowable expenditures.
6. An up-to-date job description for the position is maintained and a minimum annual performance review is conducted – all pay increases or bonuses (other than cost-of-living inflationary) based on performance reviews or job responsibility changes.
7. Technician has been orientated to the district purpose, function and goals and attends all or part of at least half district board meetings.
8. District carries out at least two publicity efforts in the year based on the technician being a district employee contributing technical assistance to on-the-ground conservation in your community.
9. District carried out open and equitable competitive hiring process to fill technician position with best possible candidate.
10. District provides assurance that technical workload for following year is same or increased from current year.

Guidelines on Increasing Funding

Requests for increased funding for a position in subsequent years will be assessed within the following parameters:

1. Required to increase hours from a part-time to a full time position.
2. An increase after a probationary period for new hire agreed at time of hiring between employee and district.
3. Cost-of-living increases aligned with those granted by the State of Colorado to its employees.
4. Potential salary increases to be based on performance reviews and related to:
 - a. A permanent increase based on satisfactory or better job performance (max 3% for exceptional performance)
 - b. A one-off bonus incentive for exceptional work performance (max 1.75 % of gross annual salary)
5. An increase due to documented increase in skills or responsibilities

If a district wishes to apply for an additional position as well as an existing position, it may do so but will be required to apply separately and competitively with newly applying districts for the additional position.